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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

Military Costs to the Soviets of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
7 January 1969

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Military Costs to the Soviets of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia

Summary

The invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact forces was a relatively inexpensive military operation. Assuming the Soviets absorbed all the costs of the invasion, outlays in 1968 would have amounted to about 100 million rubles, or 400 million dollars in US cost terms--roughly one-half of one percent of the estimated total Soviet defense and space spending in 1968. Some of these costs could probably be offset by adjusting operational and training activities in 1969.

A permanent Soviet occupation force at present levels could result in continuing costs of 30 million to 100 million rubles a year, depending on how much new equipment and personnel are activated in the USSR to support or replace the forces now in Czechoslovakia.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Strategic Research and coordinated with the Office of Economic Research.

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1. The invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact forces was in many respects comparable to a large-scale military exercise because of the absence of resistance and the geographic proximity of the Warsaw Pact forces to Czechoslovakia. It was therefore relatively inexpensive.

2. In calculating the cost of the invasion, the only expenses considered were those over and above what would have been required to maintain the forces under normal circumstances. These expenditures--the operating expenditures and the cost of replacing the minimal equipment losses--are estimated to be on the order of 100 million rubles. This is about two percent of the estimated outlays for the Soviet general purpose forces in 1968 and roughly one-half of one percent of estimated total defense and space spending for the year.

3. In dollar equivalent terms--what the US would pay for a military operation of a similar scale, rather than the ruble cost converted at the official exchange rate--the supplemental expenditures would have amounted to about 400 million dollars (see the following tabulation).

Estimated Direct Costs of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia

	Million New Rubles (1955 Prices)	Million 1966 US Dollars
Reserve Mobilization	77	324
Ground Force Units	24	78
Airlift: Resupply and Tactical Aircraft	3	6
Total	104	408

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4. The bulk of the expenses were clearly associated with the Soviet forces and are almost certainly paid for by the USSR. The Soviets may also have agreed to reimburse East Germany, Hungary, and Poland for their limited participation.

5. About 325,000 men were directly involved in the operation: 300,000 men were associated with the 27 ground force divisions and the remainder were assigned to the force of about 500 tactical fighters and fighter-bombers and the 350 transport aircraft involved in airlift and resupply efforts.

6. Besides the personnel directly involved, it is estimated that another 10 divisions (140,000 men) within the USSR were brought up to full strength but did not move from their home bases. Except for the costs of the reservists associated with these units, no other costs were considered for this activity.

7. The current occupation forces are estimated to consist of 60,000 to 70,000 ground troops and about 2,800 air support troops. If the present ground force units remain in Czechoslovakia indefinitely, the Soviets may incur additional costs of 30 million to 100 million rubles (110 million to 400 million dollars) annually.

8. The low side of the expenditure range assumes the Soviets will add 20,000 men to their current ground forces. These men will be required to support the new group of forces established in Czechoslovakia.

9. The high estimate assumes that the Soviets will add these required support personnel and in addition will strengthen existing units within the USSR to offset the men and equipment assigned to Czechoslovakia. The Soviets have sufficient aircraft to meet their internal requirements, and therefore no expenditure increases were estimated for the two tactical fighter regiments expected to remain in Czechoslovakia.

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10. It has not been possible to quantify the dislocation and other indirect military costs of the operation. The overall indirect impact on the Soviet economy of the partial mobilization and occupation of Czechoslovakia is not believed to be significant. The diversions of trucks and men from the civilian sector, notably from agriculture, in western parts of the USSR apparently were not extensive enough to disrupt the harvest or other essential civilian activity.

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